

Suffrage State Officials Approve Woman Vote



Edward F. Dunne, Governor of Illinois.

"As a result of experience, I still entertain the same view with reference to woman's suffrage that I had when I signed the bill."

Governors, Judges and Other Dignitaries in States Where Woman Suffrage Has Been Shown of Practical Benefit Tell How They Have Found It to Work.

The Eight Questions Answered by Officials of Pro-Suffrage States

1. Has there been any consensus of opinion in your state that women have neglected their homes in order to vote?
2. Have you found, or have you heard, in your state that the influence of women's votes has been deleterious in any way to the social fabric of any commonwealth there?
3. Have you found that the best women take little or no part in public affairs and have little influence, while the undesirable women are active, utilized and respond to the appeal of the worst political influences, with the result that the laws and the social fabric suffer?
4. Have you noted this tendency particularly in the cities or other crowded communities, from which it might be inferred that equal suffrage would be fatal to sound government in the overcrowded cities of the East?
5. Mr. Wickersham says in effect that a woman is not a good citizen, or, rather, is not exercising the full responsibility of a good citizen, by merely casting a ballot; that full citizenship

implies service on juries, willingness to perform military service when required, etc. Has such view of woman's capacity and responsibility obtained in your state, or has the expression of woman's citizenship rather taken the form best adapted to her natural qualifications, such as a direct personal interest in public improvements relating to health, the welfare of the child, etc.?

6. Has equal suffrage in your state resulted in any legislation which has imposed upon women the burden of equal responsibility in the support of the family?
7. Has any legislation taken from women any exemptions or privileges which they had before they obtained the vote?
8. Has not the opportunity to vote quickened the interest and understanding of public questions on the part of women, so that women who formerly took little interest in public matters or were considered uneducated have found voting a subject of personal concern to them and beneficial to the community?



Arthur Capper, Governor of Kansas.

"The extension of suffrage to Kansas women has not caused them to neglect their homes in the slightest degree."

Below are given some of the interesting results of a canvass of suffrage states recently conducted by Thomas W. Hotchkiss. Mr. Hotchkiss, curious to receive first hand information from the officials of Western states where suffrage is in actual practice, appealed to the Governors and other dignitaries of these communities asking them to give to the people of New York State their observations of the way suffrage for women works in their environs. He framed eight questions which he tried to make representative of all the anti-suffrage arguments advanced, and the suffragists say the answers here printed should once and for all set at rest those persons in New York State who are still doubting, with Tuesday's balloting drawing near.

The statement of Governor Carlson of Colorado, that "one of Colorado's biggest assets is her voting public, which consists of intelligent women, as well as men," epitomizes the feeling of the men whose opinions are given below. They express the belief that woman's citizenship has very largely taken the best form adapted to her own qualifications—that is, in matters regarding health, the welfare of the child and home—and explain how

she has met her duty as a citizen as far as jury or military service is concerned.

Many of the men addressed selected what they considered the salient question and directed the full force of their argument on that.

Included in the list of men who render their homage to the good the injection of the woman vote has accomplished are: George A. Carlson, Governor of Colorado; John B. Kendrick, Governor of Wyoming; Joseph Carey, former Governor of Wyoming; Governor Withycombe of Oregon; Emmet D. Boyle, Governor of Nevada; Edward F. Dunne, Governor of Illinois; L. M. Howell, Secretary of State for the State of Washington; A. M. Allerson, Secretary of State for Montana; J. T. Botkin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Oregon; Albert R. Barnes, Attorney General of Utah; Moses E. Lewis, Lieutenant Governor and President of the Senate of Colorado; Arthur Capper, Governor of Kansas; Chief Justice William A. Johnston, of the Supreme Court of Kansas; George E. Morris, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Washington, and S. M. Brewster, Attorney General of Kansas.

George A. Carlson, Governor of Colorado:

One of Colorado's biggest assets is her voting public, which consists of intelligent women as well as men. The public, like the individual, is not infallible, but the voters can point to advanced legislation along every humane line. In all reforms the women have taken an active part, and important movements have often had their inception in gatherings of public-spirited women.

Governor Withycombe of Oregon:

1. There is no intelligent opinion here that women have neglected their homes in order to vote.

2. I do not believe, nor have I heard, that the influence of women's votes has in any way been deleterious to the best interests of the commonwealth.

3. I firmly believe that it is the best women who are most interested in exercising their ballots.

4. I know of no reason, judging from our experience, why equal suffrage should not be as successful in the East as it is in the West.

5. We find the women of Oregon perfectly willing and capable of assuming their share of public work and responsibility. Briefly, Oregon's experience with equal suffrage has

made me more than ever an enthusiastic believer in "votes for women."

Emmet D. Boyle, Governor of Nevada, has this to say:

The women of Nevada were enfranchised only last November, and there have been no state-wide elections since that time. It is impossible, therefore, for me to answer your questions categorically. I will say, however, that Nevada women appear to be taking an active and intelligent interest in politics, and I believe that they will give a good account here, as they have done in other Western states which have enjoyed suffrage for years. Personally, I consider most of the arguments against woman suffrage to be silly and unwarranted by the experience of those communities which have tried the experiment of permitting their women to vote, none of which, I am sure, would return to the old order of things were the opportunity given them.

Governor S. V. Stewart, of Montana:

Cannot answer yet for achievements in his state since women have voted at no important election. He does say, however: "The women of Montana are exhibiting the keenest interest in the matter of suffrage and everything shows that the result will be beneficial."

Woman's Vote Not Deleterious to Social Fabric, Says Gov. Kendrick of Wyoming.

John B. Kendrick, Governor of Wyoming:

1. Most decidedly the consensus of opinion is that women have not neglected their homes in order to exercise their right to vote.

2. The influence of women's votes has not been deleterious in any way to the social fabric.

3. We find that women of all classes taken an interest in public affairs and have a great deal of influence.

4. Personally I am of the opinion that the woman vote could be handled just as readily in the crowded centres as the men's vote.

5. The expression of woman's citizenship has very largely taken the best form adapted to her own qualifications—that is, in matters regarding health, the welfare of the child and home. It would seem to me that service on juries or willingness to perform military service was not requisite for a full understanding or exercise of the ballot on the part of woman.

6. Not in the slightest.

7. Women in Wyoming are in possession to-day of all the exemptions and privileges given to men and have not been deprived of any by reason of the vote.

8. I am quite certain that the opportunity to vote has quickened very materially the interest our women take in public questions and in all matters beneficial to the communities in which they reside.

Albert R. Barnes, Attorney General of the State of Utah:

"It has been my observation that only the more serious minded and the more intelligent women take any active part in politics. I have yet to hear the criticism that the activities of women in the political world have in any way been deleterious to the social fabric or resulted in the neglect of the home. It has been my observation in attendance upon political meetings that women are keenly interested in becoming familiar with the problems presented and with the personnel of the respective tickets. It has been my observation, too, that the undesirable women, such as you have mentioned, are not, generally speaking, active in political matters. You do not meet them at the primaries or the polls, and they seem to have little or no influence in elections. We have had during the last three or four years in our Legislature a number of women members of the House, and I am positive that through the influence of these

women we have had legislation proposed and passed which has had a most beneficial effect in social welfare work.

Moses E. Lewis, Lieutenant Governor and President of the Senate of the State of Colorado:

I do not believe that women have neglected their homes to any extent in order to vote; many of the best women in the state take a great deal of interest and an active part in public affairs, while those you refer to as undesirable women take an active part only when certain issues are at stake. Equal suffrage is not a menace nor a detriment to good and sound government in any community.

Judge F. H. Norcross, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nevada:

Without repeating the questions I will answer the same by number, as follows:

1. No. Women thus far have voted only in municipal elections in three of the cities of the state. I have heard no complaint that there was any neglect of their homes by the women voters on the occasion of these elections, although the vote of the women was very large.

2. No.

3. In the municipal elections thus far held in this state the best women in the state voted. From my observation the best women throughout the state take as much interest in public affairs as the men do and are able to vote as intelligently. For years before suffrage was granted in this state as many women attended meetings where public questions were discussed as men.

4. We have not large cities in this state, and hence I cannot answer the question from personal experience of observation. The largest cities on the Pacific Coast generally have not had the experience suggested.

5. The so-called argument that woman should be denied the ballot because she cannot perform the same civic duties as men is fallacious. Full citizenship does not necessarily imply jury or military service. As to jury service, many of the most intelligent male citizens are excluded by statute; besides, there are reasons to believe that certain kinds of jury service could be performed by women better than by men. As to military service, those in active military service are about the only large body of male citizens that are practically excluded from the ballot. A large percentage of the male population is unfit and is excluded from military service.

Woman's Vote Having Wholesome Effect on Kansas Politics, Says Its Governor.

Arthur Capper, Governor of Kansas:

1. The extension of suffrage to Kansas women has not caused them to neglect their homes in the slightest degree. What time they devote to politics is not taken from their household work, but from pink teas and similar functions. Their spare time, formerly devoted to social functions, is partly spent now in the study and discussion of economic and political questions.

2. The influence of women's votes has not been deleterious to the social fabric of the state. The direct contrary is true in Kansas. Women now discuss vital governmental issues along with the men, and with a keen appreciation of their new responsibilities of citizenship. The participation of women in public affairs is having a wholesome effect in cleansing the state of spoilsman politics and is making for higher ideals in both public and private life.

3. There is no basis in fact for the argument advanced by opponents of suffrage that the best women take no part in public affairs, while the undesirable women are very active. In Kansas the reverse is true.

4. The women of one state are about like the women of another state. Those who perhaps may have been against suffrage will soon become interested when suffrage is once established. Some issue or some candidate is almost sure to arouse the interest and enthusiasm of every thinking woman. It seems to me that one of the most glaring weaknesses in the argument of the anti-suffragists is the fact that they do not want women to have the ballot for fear of the influence of the bad or undesirable women. They do not mention the

fear of the bad men, who have always had the ballot and who are tenfold more adept in their machinations. Yet the bad men have not gained the upper hand over the men who believe in clean, upright citizenship.

5. I cannot agree with those who think that a woman is not a good citizen simply because she doesn't perform military service or agree to do so when the right of suffrage is thrust upon her. The extension of suffrage doesn't affect the status of a woman as a soldier in the least. There is no more reason why she should become subject to military duty after she votes than before she casts the ballot. In Kansas she is exempted from military service. Enemies of suffrage lose sight of the fact that there are thousands upon thousands of men in this country who by reason of some physical disability are unfit for military service. But these men have never been deprived of the right to vote on that account; nor should they be. Why, then, should the women not be accorded the same right?

6. Equal suffrage has not deprived the father of a family of his responsibility in the support of his family. Kansas men do not want to be deprived of that privilege. They have too much chivalry for that.

7. The enfranchisement of Kansas women has not taken from them any exemptions they had before except jury service. The last Legislature passed a law giving women the right to withdraw from jury service if they desired. However, women very frequently serve on our juries, and the district judges say they raise the standard of jury service.

8. The extension of suffrage has quickened the interest of women in public questions.



S. V. Stewart, Governor of Montana—A suffrage state.

George E. Morris, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Washington:

1. It is the consensus of opinion that women have not neglected their homes to vote.

2. I have never heard that the influence of woman suffrage is deleterious to the social fabric. From my personal observation I regard it as uplifting and beneficial.

3. I have not found that the best women take little or no part in public affairs, while the undesirable women are active and respond to the appeal of the worst political influences.

4. The last observation is particularly true in our larger cities, where the women have been most active.

5. So far as I have observed, our women are exercising the full responsibility of citizenship within their physical capabilities.

6. The effect of equal suffrage has not been to impose upon women any added burden of equal responsibility for the support of the family, as under our laws the wife shared that burden with the husband prior to the adoption of woman suffrage.

Question 7 was answered negatively.

Two Years of Woman Suffrage and It Is Good, the Illinois Governor Testifies.

Governor Edward F. Dunne of Illinois:

Two years' experience of woman suffrage has proved satisfactory. The women of Illinois have voted on all public questions and for all public officials, excepting those prescribed by the constitution, for the last two years as the result of my having signed the women's suffrage law in July, 1913. As the result of experience, I still entertain the same views with reference to women's suffrage that I had when I signed the bill.

J. T. Botkin, Secretary of State of Kansas:

Speaking in a general way, there has been no disposition among the women of the state to neglect their household duties. Their children have not suffered by reason of their interest and activity in public affairs, and he has heard no complaints that husbands and sons have been compelled to do their own cooking or eat cold victuals. He closes with the hope that the people of New York will follow the splendid example set by Kansas and give the women of that state the right of franchise.

Distinctly Beneficial to the State, Assert Supreme Court Chief Justices.

William A. Johnston, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Kansas:

1. I can say without hesitation there is no foundation for such an assertion.

2. No one acquainted with the situation in Kansas will undertake to say that the influence of women's votes has been deleterious to the government or the people of the state.

My own judgment, based on our experience in Kansas, is that equal suffrage will tend to better government, whether it be in crowded cities or in country districts. There is more activity and interest among women in favor of measures of health, for the protection of children or care of widows and those least able to care for themselves, but the privilege of voting has quickened their interest and understanding of public questions, and they manifest willingness to assume their share of responsibility as citizens.

The argument that they are not good citizens because they are not willing to serve on juries or perform military service is not sound. In general, they are willing to perform any duty in these respects which women can efficiently perform. In the matter of jury service, the Legislature of Kansas has exempted women, just the same as men are exempted.

Judge Frank A. Moore, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Oregon, says in reply to questions numbered 1 and 2, "No."

To other questions Judge Moore replies: "From observation in this state, it may reasonably be inferred that equal suffrage in the large cities of the East will promote good government. The presence of women at elections in Oregon has purified the political atmosphere and tends to keep sober, at least for a day, or away from the polls, the undesirable element."